

1.
AN
ACCOUNT
OF THE
Taking Athlone.

In a LETTER from a Gentleman there, to his Friend in
London, Dated July 5th, 1691.

Licens'd, July 17, 1691.

Camp at Athlone, July the 5th, 1691.

S I R,

Since my last, we have lain still, sitting and providing for a March, which will be to morrow; but whether towards *Galloway* or *Limerick*, is not yet known. The Enemy were yesterday at *Ballinsloe*, but are since marched further towards *Limerick*. 'Tis confirmed by sundry Deserters, That most of the Army would come in to us, but that the *French* are made a Rear-Guard to prevent it: we shall soon bring matters to an issue; for the Fate of *Galloway* depends on that of *Limerick*, and the Country; and since that they cannot stand against us in the Field, their business will be to defend those two Towns: but our thundering Train has so terrified them, that easie Conditions will make them surrender, 'specially now we are Masters of all the Passes, and that they are in daily dread of our Fleet.

The Report you have of Taking this Town may probably be imperfect, and therefore take this:

When our Army approached this place, the Enemy made some resistance ere we got the Town, on this side the *Shannon*, and cost us near a hundred Men, but our Men being brave, soon routed them over the Bridge, and secured themselves: after we had planted our Artillery in the Town, had resolved to storm by way of the Bridge. On *Munday* the 29th of *June* we attempted the same, by placing Fascines upon the Bridge to secure our Men, in the mean time our Batteries were playing, which did such terrible execution, together with the Bombs, that by *Tuesday* there was not a House standing in the Town, and the Castle battered to the ground; and this also killed at least six hundred of their Men, but the Town being so advantageously placed, and the Garrison supported by a numerous Army close behind them, created extraordinary confidence in the *French* General, *Sr. Ruth*, who declared, That no General in *Europe* would be so foolish to attempt storming it on this side that Water: and of the same Opinion were all our Great Officers; but our doubts were increased, when the same day the Enemy were so bold, that about eight or nine desperate Souldiers leapt over their own Works, and with sulphurous Fascines came to ours on the Bridge, and burnt them, notwithstanding all our Fire of Great and Small Shot, which flew more thick than Hail ever did; but of those there escaped but two: the Action

was

was brave and bold, and more than was expected; which caused the Generals to consult other Methods; and on this we all concluded, we must march to some other part of the *Shannon* less strong, concern was in every Man's face, except the unthinking Common Souldiers, who shewed themselves brave to admiration: the Boats we had begun to lay for passage, the General caused to be taken away; which gave such Confidence to the Enemy, that they looked upon us with contempt. Upon this the General called the General Officers to consult, and on *Tuesday* Morning it was resolved to storm the Town by the way of the Ford, just by the side of the Bridge; which was looked upon as a desperate attempt; however, it was to be so, and accordingly Eight hundred choice Grenadiers were detachd, and a Guinea to each given, (which the Enemy knew of the next moment it was agreed, for the Attacque was not to be made till Five in the Afternoon; in the mean time, the Souldiers on the other side would upbraid ours, saying, *You Rogues, Why don't you come with your Guinea's apiece? We'll sell you Wine for it*): The Grenadiers being detachd, great part of our Infantry was marcht round a Hill under covert, from the Enemies sight, to the the Ford, ready to support the Grenadiers; and our Battery supplied with all Necessaries, all our Works next the Enemy lined with Small Shot, which were done without discovery; the hour appointed was half an hour past Five, the Signal was the Ringing of the Bell, and the Word, *King William*. Before I bring them to Action, I must tell you, that on this day, being the 30th of *June*, *St. Ruth* was gone two or three Miles from *Atblone*, with some of the General Officers, to divert themselves with some Ladies, being satisfied, that Men of Sence would never attempt Storming, when such an Army lay to support it; and being thus secure, his Heart was turned to soft pleasures, and left only Major-General *Maxwell* in the Town that day. The hour being come, *Mackay* having the Charge, and *Talmarsh* Voluntier with him, the Bell rung, upon which the Enemy were amazed, but at length laught at us, calling to us thus: *You Dogs; What are you going to bury your Dead? or are you going to Mass*: but *Maxwell* soon perceived their Ruine; for at the moment our Grenadiers took the River, our Great and Small Guns fired so prodigiously fast, that the Enemy concluded the World was at an end; under this Noise and Smoak our Grenadiers got over, (but one of them shot in the passage) they immediately entered the Works, and possesst themselves of the Town, with so little opposition, that in the whole Action there was not more then fourteen or fifteen killed, and about twenty wounded, most of which will recover; and those poor Devils found in the Town were such despicable Creatures, that our Common Souldiers scorned to kill them: the whole Action was performed in twenty minutes of time, a thing so wonderful, so amazing and surprising, that we could not suddenly let in belief of the reality thereof; the Generals hugg'd each other, and spoke Praises of the Men in Tears of Joy, *Baron Ginkel* saying, *They were Men inspired with Courage*; and would always admire the Bravery of the *English*. *Maxwell* at the first sent to *St. Ruth* for Succour, but he would not believe the Message, till a second or third came; but the Town was ours before any of their Forces appeared, which was some Horse at a distance, but soon return'd, and the whole Army decamp'd with precipitance. *Maxwell*, and some Officers were took; he goes to *Dublin* this day, the rest are Prisoners; the whole Town is a heap of rubbish, not one House left standing, and the Castle all in Ruins; their Streets are full of Dead; 'tis believed we killed about 1000 Men in the time we were battering, the last Storm each Gun fired a hundred shot. I dined with *Maxwell*, who owned that our Guns had terrified the *Irish*, that we might expect little opposition from any Towns, for he was sure, that such a Train was not to be withstood. We are now repairing the Fortifications, to put it in a Condition of Defence when we march, which will be to morrow, as I said; and as we remove you shall have an Account.

F I N I S.

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